

REMARKS

Claims 13-26 and 27-32 are pending.

Claims 13-26 and 27-32 are rejected.

Grounds of Rejection

Claims 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 25, 27, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Zhang (WO 98/54012, of record).

Claims 13-17, 22-25, 27, 29, and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhang as applied in claim 13 above and further in view of Kono (JP 01297306, of record), Verdier (US 3,464,477, of record), and Mezzanotte (EP 0385192, of record).

Claims 18, 19, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhang as applied in claims 13 and 29 above, respectively.

Claims 20, 21, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhang as applied in claims 13 and 27 above, respectively, and further in view of Kanai (US 6,269,857, newly cited).

Claims 26 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhang as applied in claim 27 above and further in view of Verdier.

The sole independent claim is **claim 13**. An interview was held with the Examiner on March 10, 2004, at which time it was discussed that claim 13 would likely be allowable if limited to the inner carcass ply being sandwiched between two fabric layers. The second fabric layer of claim 27 (canceled herewith) is incorporated into claim 13. The "sandwiched" language is supported at page 5, lines 12-15 of the specification ("The first or inner carcass ply is reinforced with metal which, in the sidewall regions is sandwiched between two circumferentially disposed fabric treatments ...") and also at page 22, lines 16-20 ("The first ply 120 is metal reinforced and, in the two sidewall regions, is sandwiched between and supported by and buttressed against compressive-load-induced buckling during runflat operation by circumferentially disposed first fabric treatment layers 130a, 130b ...").

A typo was noted in **claim 17**. See specification at page 16, lines 1-5 ("Each of the fabric

treatment layers 74,76 shown in FIGURE 3 comprises parallel-aligned cords which are oriented at angles of between 20 and 50 degrees and preferably between angles of 30 degrees and 45 degrees with respect to the circumferential direction.")

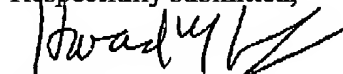
Claim 27 is canceled. Claims depending therefrom are amended to depend from claim 13. Newly-presented claim 33 maintains the claim count at 20, and parallels claim 17.

CONCLUSION

No new matter is entered by this amendment.

Due consideration and allowance of this application are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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